



Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.

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A PROMISE OF OPPORTUNITY

Edmundo Hidalgo
President and CEO

April 9, 2009

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Bernadette McGuire-Rivera
Associate Administrator
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 4812
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Docket Number 090309298-9299-01

Dear Ms. McGuire-Rivera:

This letter is being written on behalf of Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc. (CPLC). CPLC is a community development corporation in Arizona that offers extensive education, housing and social services in both urban and rural areas. I write today to ask that funds appropriated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for investment in broadband be directed towards three goals: deployment for un-served rural communities, adoption programs for urban areas already served, and improved emergency communications.

As the Internet Age rapidly moves forward, rural communities continue to be left behind. Private companies are reluctant to build out to these areas due to high costs. In states like Arizona, where much of the state is non-urban, stimulus funds can be a shot in the arm to connecting the unconnected. The investment would assist in creating countless short- and long-term jobs and offering a tool for economic and educational attainment.

Although we can connect a home to broadband, we cannot urge people to subscribe unless they possess the necessary skills, hardware and software to get online. Broadband or high-speed access is available to over 90% of homes around the country but only 60% of homes subscribe; in remote areas the figure gets cut in half. NTIA can assist by supporting programs that already have reach into at-risk communities and expand those programs with tech-specific training programs aimed at teaching residents to seek employment, find educational resources, better manage their healthcare and utilize government services, among other uses.



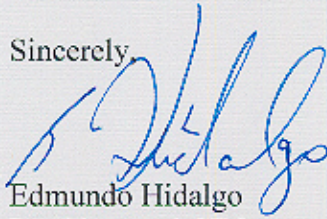
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Lack of adequate broadband connections in Arizona is not the only communications deficit we face. Emergency response crews are constantly in search of the most efficient and reliable communications tools. Some disasters, as we have seen, take traditional cellular and landline communications networks off line. Investing in mobile technologies such as satellite networks can give our first responders – and the people they serve – a fighting chance.

We look forward to working with NTIA in the future to help provide advanced telecommunication to all reaches of the nation.

Sincerely,



Edmundo Hidalgo
President and CEO